

**Notes from a New  
Afrikan P.O.W.  
Journal  
book 6**



## **Notes From A New Afrikan P.O.W. Journal**

### **Book Six**

### **Against The Wind**

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#### **About This Issue:**

*Against The Wind* was submitted by a B.L.A. member imprisoned in Nebraska, and is printed here with permission.

The "Iranian Excerpts" were submitted by a P.O.W. in Tennessee.

The March/April 1980 issue of MERIP REPORTS (Middle East Research and Information Project devoted to THE LEFT FORCES IN IRAN, and is must reading for those interested in rounding their perspective of events in that country.

The June 1980 issue of MERIP REPORTS contains a letter in the "Forum" section which clears up a few errors made in the leading article of the March/April issue, "The Guerrilla Movement in Iran, 1963-1977." For more info contact:

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New York, NY 10025

**who killed mcduffie?  
(a definitive question)**

his brain was bashed  
cranium crushed  
skull fractured/broken  
all the way around  
but they said those who beat him  
didn't kill him  
so who killed mcduffie?  
maybe it was the same ones  
who didn't kill  
clifford glover/andy heath/jay parker  
claudie reese/andy evans/luis baez  
auturo reyes/bonita carter/eula love  
elizabeth magnum/arthur miller &  
countless others  
when they musta tripped or  
their fingers slipped  
maybe it was the same ones  
who didn't kill  
jose torres/zayd shakur/fred & carl  
hampton/jonathan & george/joe dell  
twyman myers/spurgeon winters &  
a few thousand others  
perhaps it was those who didn't kill  
lumumba/che'/amilcar/biko/fanon  
mondlane/marighella/cordero &  
quite a few thousand more  
do you suppose it may have been those  
who didn't kill  
the indians & mexicans  
who didn't steal the land &  
claim that they discovered it  
who didn't steal afrikan peoples  
halfway across the planet  
who didn't loot our customs/cultures/  
religions/languages/labor & land  
who didn't bomb the japanese  
vietnamese/& boriqua too  
do you think it might have been those  
who didn't kill at attica/watts/dc/  
detroit/newark/el barrios  
at jackson state, at southern u  
at the algiers motel  
who didn't shoot mark essex for  
16 hours after he was dead  
ask them & they'll tell you  
what they didn't do  
but they can't tell you  
who killed mcduffie  
maybe it was one of those  
seizures unexplainable where he  
beat himself to death  
it wouldn't be unusual  
our history is full of cases where we  
attack nightsticks & flashlights with our heads  
choke billyclubs with our throats till we die

jump in front of bullets with our backs  
throw ourselves into rivers with  
our hands and feet bound  
and hang ourselves on trees/in prison cells  
by magic  
so it shouldn't be a mystery that  
nobody killed mcduffie  
he just died the way so many of us do  
of a disease nobody makes a claim to  
the police say they didn't do it  
the mayor says he didn't do it  
the judges say they didn't do it  
the gov't says it didn't do it  
nixon says he didn't do it  
the fbi/cia/military establishment  
says they didn't do it  
xerox/exxon/itt say they didn't do it  
the klan & nazis say they didn't do it  
(say they were busy in greensboro & wrightsville)  
i know i didn't do it  
that don't leave nobody but you  
& if you say you didn't do it  
we're back to where we started  
looking for nobody  
who killed mcduffie  
you remember nobody don't you  
like with de facto segregation  
where they said the schools were segregated  
but nobody did it on purpose  
like when they said there's been  
job discrimination for years  
but nobody did it intentionally  
that's the nobody we're looking for  
the one with the motive to kill mcduffie  
& you see, we must find this nobody  
who slew mcduffie  
because the next person nobody will beat,  
stomp, hang or shoot to death  
won't be mcduffie  
it'll be you or someone close to you  
so for your own safety,  
you should know the pedigree of  
who killed mcduffie  
you should know the reason of  
who killed mcduffie  
you should remember all those forgotten  
who died of the disease nobody makes a claim to  
so we won't be here asking  
who killed you.

Hakim Al-Jamil  
Leavenworth

## Against The Wind.

### A Response To: Organizational Connection of the Mass Front and the Armed Front

**"Each time the curtain rises, continuity has to be re-established."**

Most of the general public, most of the Movement, and even some comrades, regard the Army as only an armed force. In some measure, this conception arises from the little that is known of the origins of the Army and its early history. But the Army has kept pace with the march of events, the demands of history, of our struggle, and it has evolved. The Army is not simply an armed force, but it is a political force which uses arms - it is a politico-military organization. As a politico-military organization, the responsibility of the Army is not only to fight with arms, but to wage political and ideological battles as well.

It can be argued that one of the most persistent statements made in regard to the early history of the Army and the shortcomings of the period, was the "prematurity" of our armed actions. We feel it necessary to say a few words on this subject as part of this Response.

What makes armed actions "premature"? We say that there are two factors in play in "premature" armed actions, and We refer to them as the "subjective" and the "objective" factors **OF** armed actions.

The objective factor **OF** armed actions differs from the objective factors of our overall struggle, in which the armed action takes place - an objective state of war. This is why We hold the belief that "objectively" or "ideally" there is never a time when armed actions are "premature." How can righteous resistance to oppression, righteous offensive action against national domination, ever be "objectively" premature? It can't!

But there are objective and subjective factors **OF** armed actions. The "subjective" factor has to do with the political consciousness and skill of the armed unit; the choice of target; and timing of the act. since action is never undertaken for the sake of action, but in order to achieve a political victory, all the elements of the subjective factor **OF** armed actions are necessary to insure the greatest possible overall political effect, and thus reduce all-the-more the "premature" character of the armed act.

The "objective" factor of the armed action has to do with the coordination and complementation of the armed action by cadres, or, with cadres, organized in political or mass work units. Here, too, political consciousness, skill, timing, and choice of audience are the primary factors in the effectiveness of the group in its general and particular tasks, to insure the "maturity" of the armed action.

In most cases, the members of each group will be unknown to each other, thus, no advance notice of activities. The essential factor in their coordination will be their levels of consciousness, shared political perspectives, and similar political-military studies and training. All Revolutionary Nationalist cadres are "well-rounded," being equally proficient in both military political studies and training. We are all "political cadres," and We are all "soldiers."

In one sense, the initiative for the eventual coordination and complementation of these groups around actions, will be made by the political unit - sometimes consciously, sometimes spontaneously - as, for example, it begins activity around the murder of a New Afrikan by the oppressive forces. An example of this type would be the case of Robert Torsney: abundant mass propaganda and organizing was done around this pig to take any armed action against him out of the realm of the "premature" - especially if, after the action, even more mass work was done to reinforce the political meaning of the action. Such work would also result in more successful organizing and mobilizing of the masses for future political struggle.

The liberation of prisoners of war are not "premature" armed actions, and in such event, We have an example where the initiative for coordination is undertaken by an armed unit.

With the successful (or - hopefully not - even the unsuccessful) liberation of P.O.W.'s, the political cadres can go into action and spread propaganda of all types. This propaganda should deal not only with the event itself, but with all the political-military ramifications of the act. In this way, the campaign can be extended far beyond its original value, and beyond a few newspaper articles or leaflets which run their course in a week or two. The political cadres have an opportunity to use their imagination and creativity, to improvise on reality, and deal extensively with subjects such as: What Is A P.O.W.? The Political Implications of Prison Escapes; Why You Should Welcome An Escaped P.O.W. Into Your Basement; Why You Should Not Inform on Political Activists; When NOT To Dial "911"; How To Establish and Operate A Station of the Underground Railroad; How Not To Talk To The F.B.I., etc.

By such follow-through/complementation, the political cadres not only reinforce each particular act, but also raise consciousness, facilitate ability to organize in the future, and prepare conditions for greater

acceptance of future L.O.P. operations and other types of armed actions. A climate or atmosphere is created to shield against the propaganda and operations of the enemy. Thus, when the enemy calls us "bandits" and "common criminals," the people will know better, and respond accordingly.

Since We know that, for a nation at war - already - there is "objectively" no such thing as a "premature" armed action, We know too that if armed actions - especially a series of armed actions over a length of time - "fail," it is not because the "objective conditions of struggle" aren't ripe. It therefore must be that one or both of the factors **OF** armed actions were not effectively employed or coordinated - which makes it a matter of the shortcomings of the subjective conditions of struggle, i.e., the organization and practice of those carrying on the struggle.

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**"Without armed struggle, there is no well-defined vanguard.  
And wherever armed struggle against oppression does not exist,  
the reason is because there is no political vanguard."**

We have just seen mass rebellion by New Afrikans in Miami - which, despite certain differences, was essentially a repeat of the scenes from the late '60's. We have just seen masses of bloods who some of us would say "ain't ready," turn their backs on Andy Young and throw rocks and bottles at Jimmy Carter. We have seen bloods **die** in this rebellion, staged over the death of Arthur McDuffie, the release of his killers, and the general state of our oppression - and yet the pigs who killed Bro. McDuffie are still breathing.

A team of bugs could have performed their political-military function, in practice of the TAC Method, in Miami, where a set of objective conditions existed which had aroused mass consciousness and focused it on a specific area. Political cadres were/are using leaflets, articles, holding meetings, in pool rooms, beauty parlors and barber shops: Creating the atmosphere for People's War, giving proof of the fact that the means have already been exhausted. The bloods in Miami who were and are now shouting "We've lost faith in the system!" already have the necessary understanding about the exhaustion of means - they simply have to be organized; they need little convincing of the fact that We must fight in order to win.

The situation now is not much different from the set of objective conditions of struggle during the '60's: the masses were in the streets, then, too, turning their backs on puppet "leadership" and throwing rocks and bottles at the main enemy: Spontaneous activity in need of conscious direction; violence needing to be organized. It was a question of having both consciousness and skill on the part of armed units, and coordination and complementation of their actions by political units. The armed actions were initiated - righteously - but the coordination and complementation were lacking. The armed units have since been shifted the total blame by some for "not having synchronized its military action with political action." (If this charge is valid, it would seem to imply recognition of the vanguard status of those performing the actions, because it is the responsibility of the "vanguard" to synchronize military and political action.)

**"Revolutionary politics,  
if they are not to be blocked,  
must be diverted from politics as such.  
Political resources must be thrown into an  
organization which is simultaneously  
political and military,  
transcending all existing polemics."**

So, it seems, what makes armed actions "premature" is essentially the failure to synchronize them with political action.

"...The Black Panther Party split into two factions: Oakland and the East Coast. As a result, a tendency towards armed struggle with little political direction occurred on the East Coast. Heroic battles took place from coast to coast, as the police battled the B.L.A. But the B.L.A. soon found itself isolated because of not having synchronized its military action with political action."

The B.P.P. split into two factions, but the split didn't manifest geographical differences, it manifested political differences. The split was a result of an attempt to prevent revolutionary politics from being blocked. It was an attempt to transform an organization, to take it out of the arena of "all existing polemics" and into an arena where it would be "simultaneously political and military."

The point being made is that, when the police battled members of the B.L.A., they were, in fact battling "party members" who were carrying out armed actions. "The Black Panther Party split into two

factions" - but not one a "political" and the other a "military" faction. The split resulted in the formation of a **NEW PARTY** - an armed party - which had begun the development of particular responses to the war and its consequent demands.

But We must also draw attention to certain realities of the period, such as that others besides the B.L.A. must accept their weight in the "failure to synchronize" - that is, if We're talking about the one movement that We're all a part of. There were many who considered themselves "the vanguard," and yet they stood silently on the sidelines while battles raged from coast to coast. Some bloods raised vehement voices against the guerrillas, and denied potential aid because they didn't agree with the guerrillas, or because they quoted from Nkrumah's black book, rather than Mao's red book...and We could go on with examples already too familiar to everyone.

But again: If We were all truly part of the "same movement," then why the failure to synchronize? If, for whatever reason, the Army, as an organizationally separate formation in the movement, was unable to synchronize, why didn't others do so, and provide the necessary political direction and/or political support?

The answer cannot be simply "spontaneity" (or "prematurity"), because spontaneous activity has an underlying cause. Neither can the answer be simply that there was an "absence of unity," because there are underlying, material, causes here, too.

There was "difference of opinion": some bloods believed in the necessity of armed struggle, while others believed in the fundamentally different "possibility" or even "probability" of armed struggle, while still others didn't really believe in any form of armed force - despite what came out of their mouths or from the tips of their pens. Some bloods believed it was time to initiate the process of armed struggle, and others didn't. Some had a perspective and a strategy for protracted urban guerrilla warfare, and some didn't. Some bloods believed it necessary that they print or reprint the Communiqués issued by the guerrillas, and some bloods didn't want the "heat" that such action may have drawn from the enemy. To some, it was a matter of giving support - however limited or great - because they understood the underlying purpose and sincerity of the guerrillas, and placed this within the larger context of struggle, while others stayed aloof from, or attacked the guerrillas for no other reason than that the guerrillas were not members of their organizations: they weren't in The Family.

Our concern, here, is not to "create" or to "aggravate differences," but We are determined to have the necessary synchronization in the future, and We know that the "future" is one second from now. We know that there are differences, and that they cannot be resolved by avoiding them. And, in the attempt at resolution, there must be mutual respect.

We know that to avoid dogmatism in the revolutionary process means not only to avoid rigid theories and the "exportation of ideologies," but it means to avoid rigid timetables as well. We ask ourselves: How many New Afrikan Women, Men and Children must die or be maimed by L.A.P.D. or K.K.K. gunfire before "selective retaliatory action" becomes "timely"? We know that there are many forces at work in the world that We do not control.

Who among us would set a timetable for the initiation of armed actions and subsequent politically synchronized support of those actions!

But We do not look forward to, and do not plan for, a future in which We alone will be responsible for synchronizing military and political actions. While We state, clearly, that We will not be totally dependent upon others to politically support our armed actions, We also state clearly that We recognize and work toward the necessary material conditions of a Movement sufficiently unified on points of analysis, strategy and program, so that all the requirements of struggle are met.

And, We understand that a part of our contribution to the effort to meet these requirements must be our ability to recognize and admit our mistakes, learn from them, correct them, and intensify the process of strengthening our organization internally, on all levels, so that it can be a more effective component of a unified Movement and forward-moving struggle.

It was with such an understanding that, in 1975, the B.L.A. Coordinating Committee issued the Communiqué, *Looking Back*: "Over the past four years, since the birth of the B.L.A., We have experienced many tactical setbacks, some have been costly in material, others in manpower (P.O.W.'s), and the most costly in blood of comrades, who gave their lives. Nevertheless, the B.L.A. still lives, still continues to struggle with arms against the oppressor.

"In the beginning when We started out, our primary targets were the police, as a political consequence for their murder and brutalities against New Afrikan and Third World peoples. Bank monies were expropriated as a means of support for guerrilla units and seen as an attack on capitalism. Most of our activities were carried out on the East and West coasts, in large cities, with the hope of raising the militancy of the people to resist the oppressive state apparatus. The spark We hoped would start the fire that would burn Babylon down, was extinguished by state propaganda organs and special anti-guerrilla squads. Many

comrades moved to the South, hoping to establish a southern base; this, too, failed, because We lacked knowledge of the terrain and the people. So again We moved back to the cities, this time as fugitives with little popular support among the masses. Our primary activity at that period was hiding and carrying out expropriations. With the deaths of Woody and Kimu, We launched assaults against the police that set them on edge; their counter-attack saw us at the end of 1973 with four dead, over twenty comrades imprisoned in New York alone. In New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Georgia, B.L.A. members were taken prisoner by federal agents working with local police to crush the B.L.A. The year 1974 found the guns of the B.L.A. quiet, until April, when, with so many comrades imprisoned, We assaulted the Tombs in an effort to liberate some comrades; the attempt was unsuccessful, and two weeks later found three more comrades captured in Connecticut.

"While our ranks outside were being diminished, our ranks inside started to grow. Within the prisons themselves, comrades launched numerous assaults and escape attempts on a regular basis. Before 1974 was over, another comrade was shot and captured, victim of an informant. Now, in the third month of 1975, We have one dead, two captured in Virginia, and another escape attempt in New York. Since the beginning We have shown a willingness to struggle and our efforts have not been in vain, for We are rich in experience that comes with trial and error. Now, in the year 1975 - the Year of Sorting Out and Consolidation - We must sum up those experiences, analyze them, and return to the front.

"What have We learned? We have learned much about the enemy and about ourselves. The enemy, We have come to learn, is weak, easily demoralized, and ineffective against the audacity of the guerrilla. He relies heavily on informants, the news media, and technology to combat the guerrilla. He takes advantage of our mistakes, uses a high concentration of troops as a means to intimidate and ward off attack. The enemy implements pacification programs among the people, along with terror tactics, in an effort to forestall the revolutionary tide. In essence, a lot of the enemy's strength comes from our own weakness. True, the enemy is materially and technically superior, but these gaps will be closed once We organize ourselves, instill self-discipline and organizational discipline among our ranks, improve our technical know-how, strengthen our lines of communication.

"We have learned about ourselves, that We lacked a strong ideological base and strong political base, yet there is great potential for the latter. In failing to lay down an over-all strategy, we have become isolated from the masses; We have failed in seeing the strategical victories in our tactical setbacks, and thus failed to press the attack. There is much We have learned and much to be learned - how to improve relations between comrades and the people, and comrades and each other - yet by continuing to struggle, We will overcome these difficulties with revolutionary determination.

"In looking back, We must never forget those comrades who gave their lives for the people, nor forget our mistakes - but constantly sum up the things We've learned. Yet our look back must be a glance to see where We're going, so as not to travel the same road, where so many difficulties beset us. Let us look to the future with faith, and knowledge that the experiences of the past will be guides in assessing and implementing our present programs that will take us to victory in the future."

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In 1977, one of our comrades put forth in our *Newsletter* that, "Because of the state's destruction of the BPP We have been denied the existence of a party, but our army has remained intact and is growing. This does not mean that We should not build the necessary organization with both the party and army, two indispensable components that can't exist without the other, with the structure, machinery and logistical system to not only sustain the protracted war, but also to direct, recruit, and organize the increasing consciousness of the people into a revolutionary force. If We are not a party, We should be, or should build one immediately. How can We help the people establish revolutionary political power without a clear, precise ideology?"

But even prior to this point, the CC, in pointing to the requirements needed to intensify the consolidation effort and move toward a common strategy, pointed out that "We must always be guided by a clear and scientific ideological approach, therefore, every comrade must prepare themselves ideologically to deal with such a program when it is presented." Subsequently, a program began to be developed to harmonize political and military studies, so that "common eyes would see the same."

Related features of consolidating our ranks ideologically and organizationally were the adoption of the New Year and Slogan. Designating a New Year, and choosing names for it, was not intended to be a useless, symbolic exercise. The name of each New Year has the effect of a national policy directive, which sets the enveloping moral and political/organizational climate and direction for the entire organization. The name of the New Year is chosen based upon consideration of the general period of the entire Movement



and of our organization. In general, it can be said that the name of the New Year points to internal weaknesses which must be strengthened, and objectives of an ideological, political or organizational nature which must be met.

The name of our present New Year is: The Year of Heightening Discipline and Closing The Ranks. To "Heighten Discipline" means, first and foremost, that We heighten our grasp and practice of the ideology, line and strategy of the organization, and of the Movement. To be "under the discipline of" or "subject to the discipline of" any organization, but of the Army in particular, means that our comrades must heighten their efforts to understand our ideology, our political-military line, and our strategy; it means that We must accept these as our own; that We are therefore able to put them into practice, be responsible for them, and able to fight for them and defend them. "Closing the Ranks" means that our ranks must be kept in good order; that We must march in step; that our cadres must be well-selected; that We have the best weapons (political/ideological weapons) and keep these weapons in good condition. From these two brief definitions, it is clear that there is an inter-relationship between both elements of the name of the New Year, and both relate to the need for a homogeneous political/military education, consistent throughout the ranks. Through - and only through - these means, will We be able to field our cadres and organize the masses in support of them, preventing our isolation, allowing for the endurance of the units. Only in this way can We close the ranks, insure organizational consolidation through ideological consolidation. We thereby keep the ranks in good order, march in step, be selective in choosing cadres because We have a consistent criteria for doing so, and a well-thought-out means for testing and training cadres, to develop our weapons and keep them in good working order. Thus, also, is the Army developed and strengthened on the basis of the dialectical relation between political action and armed action in the revolutionary process, and emerges as an effective politico-military formation.

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In *Message To The Black Movement*, also issued by the Coordinating Committee in 1975, it was put forth that: "Our ultimate or strategic goal at this time, in creating the apparatus of revolutionary violence, is to weaken the enemy capitalist state, creating at the same time objective-subjective conditions that are ripe for the formation of a National Black Liberation Front composed of many progressive, revolutionary, and nationalist groupings, and in this same process create the nucleus of armed clandestine organs which such a Front would need in order to carry out its political tasks."

We think it safe to say that, if asked to define "the apparatus of revolutionary violence," most of us would describe it as the Army, or an armed group; and, if asked to define "revolutionary violence," the essence of the answer would describe an armed action, or something which lent itself to a purely military phenomenon, characterized by its execution by a small, clandestine group.

Our understanding of the passage just quoted from *Message* says that: We create the apparatus of revolutionary violence as a strategic means of: (1) weakening the enemy capitalist state; (2) at the same time creating conditions for the formation of a Front; (3) in the same process or at the same time, creating the nucleus of armed clandestine organs. It is the apparatus of revolutionary violence which does each of these three things.

The passage therefore coincides with our conception of revolutionary violence, that is: "revolutionary violence" relies on two kinds of force and two forms of struggle - military and political - and a combination of these; political force and forms of struggle assume the character of revolutionary violence when the actions of the broad masses are undertaken outside the bounds of colonial law and legitimacy and are directly aimed at the seizure of state power for the nation.

Taking it further, We see that "the apparatus of revolutionary violence" is a political, as well as a military, apparatus. The functions and activities performed by this apparatus, as they create the objective and subjective conditions for the formation of a Front, necessarily involve contributing political direction as well as exercising military force.

Such a conception of "the apparatus of revolutionary violence" implies an apparatus capable of combining both armed and political forces, of coordinating both military and political struggles. Thus, again, the apparatus of revolutionary violence is a political-military apparatus. The methods and action that such an apparatus employs are "best" and "most revolutionary" when they create and organize those forms of "revolutionary violence" most appropriate for a given set of circumstances, and can successfully mobilize the power of the masses of our people against the continued domination of colonialism over the Republic of New Afrika, and bring about the independence of the nation under the most favorable conditions.

Having such a conception of Revolutionary Violence is also consistent with our conception of imperialist/colonialist violence, as well as with the accepted definition and reality of the practice of genocide against us and in other parts of the world.

Imperialism/colonialism is a violent phenomenon; all aspects, all forms of imperialist/colonialist reality and practice constitute forms of violence upon and vis-a-vis the colonized. Not all of these forms of violence are armed. Genocide is practiced not only when We are killed or physically brutalized, but also by a totality of systematically created and maintained conditions which result in serious mental harm, and which are calculated to bring about our physical destruction and/or to prevent our progressive, self-determined and independent development.

So, with this conception of the apparatus of revolutionary violence, and of revolutionary violence itself, We must arrive at new conceptions of such things as the "party" and the "army" and their relationship to each other; new conceptions of the "armed front" and the "mass front" as well, because many bloods tend to draw lines between them where none should exist.

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*News/letter* number 23 included an article titled "Organizational Connection of the Mass Front and the Armed Front." This article provides a good ideo-historical analysis, and We have no questions regarding this part of it. We do have questions, however, regarding several elements of the scheme proposed for the organizational connection between the respective fronts, although We will concentrate this Response on only one of them. We felt the need to make this response because after careful study of the article, it was clear to us that its purpose was not to present a "logical" connection, in view of the realities and possibilities of conditions, and resting on a scientific application of revolutionary principles. Rather, the purpose of the article, it seems to us, was to propose a "connection" between the mass and armed fronts which would curtail the political, economic and social "power" of the armed front, by preventing "contact" between the armed front and the masses. It's our belief that this was one of the reasons some bloods failed to support military actions in the past, and why so little political and military support is given to the B.L.A. in the present.

The article in question is divided into sections, and in the first section, the first relevant point made is that the organization of "armed struggle" at each stage of the New Afrikan liberation process, is necessary because our struggle is a question of contemporary power - state power - and not a mere emotional, political or theoretical ideal. "Black national liberation by its own definition implies changes beyond the system of the status quo, beyond the strictures erected by the oppressor classes, and for this reason the organization of nationalist and revolutionary violence is implicit to the entire liberation process."

The second point made in this section, to explain the necessity of having an "armed capacity" at each stage of our liberation process was that: "...any power movement without an extra-legal capacity is impotent, and a movement with an extra-legal capacity that does not utilize the available legal channels of protest and struggle cannot insure the development of its cause...These seeming extremes form an integral unity of complementary opposites in the liberation process. There can be no national liberation, no black survival, no victory of the black working-class majority, without both non-violent and violent organization of the struggle for power."

Thus, so far, this article tends to coincide with the definition and conception of "revolutionary violence" given above, and also tends to coincide with the strategic conception of armed struggle which We embrace. But the article continues: "When the repression and criminal violence of the status quo seek to hold in check the development of the movement and the intensity of the black masses, nationalist extra-legal forms of struggle must be employed in order to maintain a mass psychological basis for national survival and insure that the practical political and social gains secured through legal struggle continue to develop toward revolutionary goals, i.e., national liberation...Extra-legal forms of struggle are not just aimed at keeping in step with the legal forms mass struggle may assume, extra-legal struggle and organization are also aimed at securing nationalist dominance over every aspect and phase of the political struggle...Extra-legal organization is the personification of nationalist authority, without which liberation is impossible. The power to command obedience from a diverse spectrum of opinion is not only based on 'moral' or 'political' grounds, it is also based on the strategic and tactical application of pure physical power, or the threat of it. Organization of this physical power is political, social, and economical, and therefore responsibility must be clearly defined, for by its own dynamic nationalist organization of physical force is undemocratic, at least in its relation to the democracy of the mass front."

We must stop here and question, first of all, from a theoretical viewpoint, the wisdom of asserting (or implying) the need to wait until repression moves in on the masses before employing "extra-legal" forms of struggle. In the propaganda of nearly all progressive, nationalist and revolutionary organizations now on the

scene, it is clearly stated that "We are a nation at war," and it would seem that under this condition, repression and criminal violence of the enemy, seeking to hold in check the development of the movement, becomes, at the least, a relative matter, i.e., present level of repression relative to past levels, relative to future levels. Colonial subjects are always the objects of repression from the colonizer, who constantly seeks to hold in check the development of revolutionary movement. Under such circumstances, it is not a question of determining "when repression comes" - as if it were not already a reality of daily life - but rather a question of determining what levels of repression, and/or what particular instances of repression, are suitable situations around which to initiate particular actions.

Also, We must question the connected implication that the "practical political and social gains secured through legal struggle" can only be maintained through application of armed force, and not making it clear that these practical gains were accomplished with the assistance of armed force. Since We know that "extra-legal" forms of struggle are not undertaken for their own sake, but for the accomplishment of political objectives, it stands that "extra-legal" forms of struggle "continue" to be employed to insure that the practical political and social gains secured through legal and extra-legal struggle continue to develop toward revolutionary goals.

Further, and central to the purpose of this Response, the article draws our attention to the emphasis it places on "extra-legal" forms of struggle, not only to combat the repression of the enemy, and to secure political gains, but its role "at securing nationalist dominance over every aspect and phase of the political struggle..."

It seems that the article's emphasis on this aspect is actually the central theme of the article, and it was toward securing this aim that the particular structure outlined in the article, representing the connection between the mass front and the armed front, was designed, since "Extra-legal organization is the personification of nationalist authority...The power to command obedience from a diverse spectrum of opinion is not only based on 'moral' or 'political' grounds, it is also based on the strategic and tactical applications of pure physical power, or the threat of it."

The article tends to bring to our attention, here, the fact that, since extra-legal forms of struggle represent the personification of authority and the ability to command wide obedience, there arises the problem of placing command of such forms of struggle in "responsible" hands: "Organization of this physical power is political, social, and economical, and therefore responsibility must be clearly defined, for by its own dynamic nationalist organization of physical power is undemocratic, at least in its relation to the democracy of the mass front."

It may come as a surprise to the author of the article, but there is no metaphysical equation between "democracy" and the "mass front," and therefore the answer to the alleged problem of the undemocratic application of physical power and its influence on political, social and economic areas, does not find a simple solution. Further, We must be aware of the fact that "democracy of the mass front" must be suited to conditions of an objective state of war: revolution is illegal in amerikkka; counter-revolutionary surveillance and subversion are just as much a reality today as they were ten years ago. ALL mass work must begin on the theoretical and practical foundations of illegality and the basic rules of clandestinity.

Further, all of the democratic principles practiced by revolutionary forces, whether working on the mass or armed fronts, is based on the principles of revolutionary democracy.

More important to note is the fact that the mass front has no inherent superior moral character or ability - over and above the armed front - to insure that armed force will be employed "democratically"; "clearly defining" responsibility for the organization of physical power implies no "automatic" choice to be made, placing responsibility in the hands of "political forces" as opposed to "military forces."

The real issue here, though, has nothing to do with "democracy," but concerns the "political control over" the armed force, as is made more clear in the next section of the article.

The article's second section sets out to explain the organizational connection between mass (legal) and armed (extra-legal) struggle, represented by the mass front and the armed front. It puts forth that there are two connections, "A" and "B." Connection "A" is the political unity between the armed front and the mass front; Connection "B" is the organizational unity between the armed front and the mass front.

On the mass front, according to the scheme of the article, there are two (2) types of formations: the "mass formation" and the "vanguard formation." It is held that the latter is the primary of the two, because it establishes the organizational link between the mass front and the armed front; because the formation and success of the mass front depends on a broad-based unity with a strong Revolutionary Nationalist center of gravity. At the same time, the creation of this necessary Revolutionary Nationalist center of gravity depends on the political unity of the Revolutionary Nationalist Movement itself.

The article then implies the importance of firepower in this way: "...The conditional factor of nationalist unity, or the condition for this unity, is the revolutionary organization, efficiency, and discipline of the leading

nationalist group or groups. It is the qualitative character and political imagination of the leading group and its methodology that insure the development of both a mass nationalist party and nationalist **vanguard party**. (our emphasis) **The question of leadership within the progressive ranks, within the nationalist and working class ranks, is a fundamental question of organization of firepower.** (emphasis in original) Without firepower, the nationalist movement will have no standing whatsoever, and will be unable to create the necessary center of nationalist gravity in the overall black struggle, hence incapable of exerting nationalist leadership of the political movement and struggle for power."

Thus, the article continues, "Organizational unity between the mass front and armed front is fundamentally a question of how best to **organize political leadership** over the military apparatus of the black movement..."(our emphasis)

The article then makes the following points:

- The "mass formation" can't have an organizational connection with the armed front, because of the mass front's security problem to itself as well as the armed front, because of its open membership; also, because of the difference in the "democracy" practiced on the mass and armed fronts; thus, the unity between the "mass formation" and the armed front is a political unity of shared political goals, but there's complete separation of political method and organization;

- the "vanguard" formation of the mass front can have an organizational connection with the armed front, as well as with the "mass formation" of the mass front; the "vanguard formation," composed of committed and conscious Revolutionary Nationalist cadres, and with its advanced politics and organization, synthesizes the ideas of the people into a correct Revolutionary Nationalist strategy, and leads the Movement as a whole in carrying forward such a strategy, by supplying trained cadres, revolutionary direction and leadership to the Movement through mass struggle.

The article arrives at the following summary conclusion: "The repression that will be focused on the 'mass' party in order to thwart its legitimate political aims will drive black political sentiment and consciousness closer and ever closer to the revolutionary nationalist ideal of the nationalist 'vanguard' type party...A mass party, committed to legitimate political struggle can only combat the repression of the status quo through legitimate means, or until such means are ultimately exhausted in the minds of the people. On the other hand, a vanguard type nationalist party combats the repression of the status quo through its legitimate mass front alliances and political organization on one side, and its clandestine armed formations on the other side. Consequently, the vanguard type party utilizes both legal and extra-legal forms of struggle until such time as the former is no longer possible. The repression of the legal capacity of a vanguard type party should correspond to the repression of the 'legitimate' political struggles of the black masses, so that increased emphasis on armed organization is indistinguishable from the struggle for power."

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As We said before, it seems to us that: the intent of this article has been to propose an "organizational connection between the mass front and the armed front," which answers the question: "How best to organize political leadership over the military apparatus of the black movement." It then proposes to organize this leadership by placing it in the hands of the "vanguard formation," and justifies this placement with the claim of the potential for the military apparatus to be "undemocratic" in the application of its power: a power over which the author is concerned because of its political, social and economic potential, as well as its military potential; a power which is the personification of nationalist authority, and is capable of commanding wide obedience; a power, without which the nationalist movement will have no standing whatsoever - not even the ability to create the center of nationalist gravity.

The long and short of it is simply the creation of a "connection" which serves to "organize political leadership over" the military apparatus of the movement.

We agree that there is an urgent need to devise correct and various organizational connections between the various fronts of activity in our struggle. But We don't think that these are the methods to be used in organizing "political control over" the military apparatus of the movement.

Although in some respects the article sounds like an arsonist screaming "fire," We can relate to the concern expressed, since We know, on the one hand, that many organizations of the Movement have, in the past, experienced serious problems with their armed units. "Militarism" and fears of "coups" from armed party militants gave many political leaderships nightmares.

But the problem had - and has - more than one source, and it may that political leaderships were approaching and are approaching its solution in the wrong way.

On the one hand, as has been said, many of us had a conception of revolution as an "instant" process. Many bloods simply saw miracles flowing from the gun and were in a hurry to pick it up.

But, on the other side, the side which really bears the burden, is the political leadership which treats its armed units as something other than full party members - party members with political responsibilities and contributions which aren't begun at, ended at, or limited to, the military level.

The answer to the question can only be found once the question itself is posed correctly. The question is not how best to organize political leadership **over** the military apparatus of the movement, but rather, how best to organize political leadership for the movement; **how best to share political leadership for the movement with other formations - even if other formations happen to be political-military.**

Even political leadership **for**, rather than "over," the military apparatus is established in the same way as political leadership for any other apparatus of the movement: through a correct analysis, a correct strategy, correct and principled revolutionary practice - all by a political leadership which is itself simultaneously military and political, and which is created by the people, accepted and maintained by the people, to serve the people's needs for state power and a new social order.

**But**, there is still the question of whether or not We are talking about the **same** movement - the Movement for the Independence of the Republic of New Afrika, and a Movement which includes among its formations the Black Liberation Army.

Lest it seem to some comrades that We are belaboring an inconsequential point, We emphasize certain points made in the article itself. According to the article, it is the "vanguard formation" which leads the Movement as a whole, which establishes and maintains the organizational connection between the mass and armed fronts, and which combats repression with its clandestine armed formations. But, it must be asked, how is the vanguard formation itself formed?

According to the article, the unity in the Movement and the creation of a center of gravity for it, depend on "the revolutionary organization, efficiency, and discipline of the leading nationalist group or groups," and that it is this "group or groups" that "insure the development of BOTH a mass nationalist party and a nationalist vanguard party." Therefore, it seems to us, both the mass formation and the vanguard formation (both of which operate on the mass front) are created by the "leading group or groups." It is also the "leading group or groups" - with the firepower - who coordinate all activities on the mass front, as well as the armed front, and "lead the Movement as a whole."

The question, then, in our feeble minds, seems to boil down to one of determining the "leading group or groups." If the B.L.A. is not considered by some to be among the leading groups, then it implies that either the B.L.A. is not considered part of the New Afrikan Independence Movement, or that it is considered an apolitical formation, or a "dangerous" formation. If such is the case, then it answers many of the questions now presented by the difficulties in obtaining political and material support for the Army, and some of the questions over the difficulties in consolidating and providing the Movement with a center of gravity - and the sufficient organization of its firepower.

We believe that the consolidated body - which has been referred to by some as FROLINA, *Front for the Liberation of New Afrika* - would become a reality much sooner if We all begin to base more of our efforts on simple mutual respect and principled revolutionary practice, and thereby not only give birth to FROLINA but to its military apparatus, NAPLA: *New Afrikan People's Liberation Army*.

In closing We'd like to point out that "organization of armed struggle at each stage of the liberation process" must mean **applying** it at each stage of the process. Armed actions immediately begin to effect and escalate all objective and subjective conditions, and to heighten all contradictions. The benefits of armed actions are proportionate to their: (1) occurrence; (2) success. They serve to inspire and complement mass, political struggles; they help greater numbers of our people lose their fear of the enemy, their apathy, and their distrust for revolutionary forces, and to draw them into active, conscious struggle on all levels - but first and foremost, on the political level.

**Consolidate to Liberate!  
Build FROLINA and NAPLA!  
BUILD TO WIN!**

Shalimar B.

## Iranian Excerpts

### *Introduction*

Very little is known inside the u.s. about the armed revolutionary left forces of Iran, who participated in no small way in the struggle which led up to and included the February Revolution. The most active and successful of these groups are the Mujahedin and the Organization of the Iranian People's Fedayee Guerrillas (OIPFG), the latter recognized as the leading left force in Iran.

Amir Parviz Pouyan and Bizhan Jazani were both members of the OIPFG, which was formed in 1970 through the consolidation of three groups. On February 8, 1971, members of the Fedayee attacked a police station in the village of Siakal, in the attempt to liberate two of their sympathizers, and it is this date which now marks the birth of the modern armed struggle in Iran.

From its birth until 1976, the dominant line in OIPFG was that formulated by Massoud Ahmadzadeh and Amir Parviz Pouyan. They were both strongly influenced by Che Guevara, Regis Debray and Carlos Marighella, and adopted the foco theory, and thus emphasized "the propaganda of the deed," with little emphasis on mass organizing. Amadzadeh's book on the subject is titled *Armed Struggle: Both a Strategy and a Tactic*.

In the book from which the Pouyan excerpt is taken, his analysis begins by stating that when armed struggle began in Iran with the attack at Siakal, the Iranian masses had little faith in political struggle because:

1) the terror and suppression of the regime headed by the Shah fed the belief that it was invulnerable;

2) the opportunism, betrayals and political deceit of the traditional parties had brought the momentum of the masses to a halt;

3) the masses had no faith in a revolutionary vanguard.

Pouyan held that, with the beginning and endurance of armed actions;

1) the idea of the enemy's invulnerability was destroyed;

2) the confidence of the people in a revolutionary vanguard was restored;

3) the masses began to initiate various forms of political activity and revolutionary violence;

4) an economic crisis in the regime was caused by:

a. expanding the budgets for the police and army;

b. spending large sums of money for anti-revolutionary research as a means of preventing the further growth of the movement;

c. spending great amounts for propaganda in an attempt to bolster the image of the regime and discredit the guerrillas;

d. spending greater amounts to protect the regime's agencies and servants.

The economic crisis caused by these actions led to a rise of spontaneous actions by workers and clashes with the police and army, and created conditions for greater unity among the masses, and between the masses and the guerrillas. In short, it intensified the contradictions between the people and the regime; re-awakened the more conscious, previously or marginally active elements; inspired the formation of new groups; inspired strikes, propaganda activities and sabotage actions by students and workers; elements of the regime's armed forces became more conscious of their role, and in some cases sided with the guerrillas; the true nature of the opportunists was revealed more clearly to the masses; the intensified repression of the regime only added to the momentum of the revolutionary struggle.

One of Pouyan's key positions was that the guerrillas were correct in adopting the "little motor/big motor" metaphor because the fascism of the regime prevented an effective mass participation in the struggle. Pouyan believed that the masses had low political enthusiasm in the face of repression because of:

1) the absence of a tangible political movement;

2) low political/class consciousness;

3) the fact that both of these contributed to acceptance of repression and the dominant culture.

"...By preventing any mass political movement and by facilitating access to cheap entertainments, our enemy tries to accustom the workers to acceptance of the general characteristics of the petty bourgeoisie. Hence, by doing so, to spread among them the antidote to political consciousness." (page 33)

The people, according to Pouyan, reluctantly remained indifferent to the political situation in order to survive; they took refuge in cheap entertainments in order to ease the burden of repression because:

...They presume the power of their enemy to be absolute and their own inability to emancipate themselves as absolute. How can one think of emancipation while confronting absolute power with absolute weakness? It is precisely this assumption which is the reason, a negative reaction to their ability, for their indifference to political discussion, and even at times their ridicule of it. (page 34)

...The proletariat submits to this culture because it is deprived of the material conditions for resistance against it. Rejection of this culture is possible only when the proletariat has begun the process of abolishing the bourgeois relations of production. In fact, it is only in the course of political struggle that the class self-consciousness of the proletariat will find its greatest possibility to manifest and develop itself. The working class, so long as it considers itself devoid of all kinds of actual power to overthrow the rule of its enemy, cannot make any attempt in the direction of rejecting the dominant culture. It is after embarking to change the infrastructure that it employs the superstructural factors to assure its victory. (pages 34-35)

For Pouyan, the conclusion, then, was to use armed actions to draw the masses into political struggle, establishing with them first a "moral" tie, and then an organizational one. He believed that armed actions were the tool to perform this function because they were in themselves a form of agitation, and are accompanied by distinct forms of political agitation. The armed actions were to serve to make the people conscious of a source of power which is theirs; the "absolute" of the enemy is hereby endangered in action, and consequently vanishes from the minds of the people, who then begin to concentrate on the source of the armed actions, and see that the source is in fact only a partial reflection of themselves. From this point on, the vanguard is no longer alienated from the masses, but is simply "distant," because the moral tie has been established, and serves as a support for the vanguard, and as a form of participation for the people in the struggle. The people begin to see the vanguard as an element of their own growing consciousness; the vanguard becomes a real thing in their lives, to be taken seriously, investigated, and kept up with.

"...The proletariat will think of the vanguard with passion not only because it sees that, for its sake, a small group has gone into battle with an enemy equipped with an extensive arsenal, but all the more so because it sees its own future directly aligned with the future of this small group.

"The revolutionary power which is exercised by the proletarian vanguard is the reflection merely of a fraction of the power of the working class. Yet what is a swift breeze must turn into a devastating storm in order to make it possible to overthrow the established order. Thus, the incomplete reflection must be replaced with a complete reflection of its power. Hence, the exercise of revolutionary power plays a two-fold role: on the one hand, it restores to the proletariat its class consciousness as a progressive class, and, on the other hand, it persuades it to play an active role in securing the victory of the struggle which has begun in order to secure its own future. This course begins with passive support by the workers for the revolutionary struggle and, as it continues, will lead to its active support." (pages 35-36)

In 1976, the OIPFG rejected Amadzadeh's line and moved beyond Pouyan by adopting the line formulated by Jazani while in prison. The Jazani line enabled OIPFG to strengthen itself, grow in numbers and scope, establish practical links with mass struggles, and become the leading politico-military organization in Iran.

Jazani emphasized the development of cadres through political and ideological struggle, forging ties with the masses, and greater internal development of OIPFG itself.

*Excerpt from:*

***On the Necessity of Armed Struggle and Refutation of the Theory of "Survival"***

*by Amir Parviz Pouyan - OIPFG*

...It is no longer sufficient to speak about the vanguard with enthusiasm and to wish it success wholeheartedly, but it is necessary to turn this "enthusiasm" into "cognition" and this "wish" into assuming a direct role in the struggle. Since the exertion of revolutionary power can, in its course, reach such a turning point, then it can also render the enemy's weapons ineffective. Neither terror nor suppression can hinder the march of the workers towards the source of their vanguard's power. Nor can bourgeois culture hold its previous dominance over their minds, serving as a super-structure for their flight from the struggle and submission to the established order. The spell breaks and the enemy looks like a defeated magician. What makes his defeat is precisely our victory in establishing a most intimate and direct relationship with the proletariat, which, in turning into an organizational tie, no longer confronts any hindrance from the workers themselves.

The unity of the proletarian vanguard, the Marxist-Leninist groups and organizations, could not but take such a road. Exertion of the revolutionary power would make the police domination more brutal, but won't increase it. This domination cannot possibly increase, for today our enemy has mobilized all its forces to discover and suppress the militants. It only uncovers its real nature and would completely unmask its face revealing to the people its savagery which, so far, in the absence of any vehement revolutionary movement, it has deceptively disguised.

It is under these circumstances that the revolutionary forces, and at their forefront, the Marxist-Leninists, would come together in order to be able to endure the enemy's blows and survive. They would either have to join the enemy (i.e., by following a defeatist line practically to support the enemy), or they would have to join together. Remaining isolated is tantamount to annihilation. However, being drawn closer together and even joining together does not, as of yet, constitute unity.

The organizational unity of the organized Marxist-Leninists which creates the unitary political organization of the proletariat is realized during circumstances where the exertion of revolutionary power has, in the course of time, reached its climax. With each blow at the enemy, the absolute domination of the enemy in the minds of the revolutionary masses is demolished and this propels these masses a step towards participation in the struggle.

Thereafter, it is the enemy who has to expose its face more clearly at each step in order to survive and suppress ever more swiftly and, consequently, more brutally its revolutionary enemies. The enemy increases its pressure on all the classes and strata under its domination by exerting counter-revolutionary violence against the militants. Thus, it intensifies the contradictions between these classes and itself, it propels the consciousness of the masses to leap forward. It insanely attacks everything like a wounded beast. It is suspicious of all but its allies, who are its sources of power and sustenance. Every small expression of dissatisfaction, every suspicious move, every word of discontent, is met with the worst reactions. It imprisons, tortures and shoots the people, yearning to restore the bygone security.

The methods it inevitably employs, however, would just as inevitably work against itself. It wants to prevent the masses from participation in a revolutionary movement, yet each moment pushes more of them toward that course of struggle. Thus it imposes the struggle on the people - seeing the continuation of its domination harder than before, it makes the people's tolerance of this domination more difficult than ever. The masses join the struggle, put their power at the disposal of their vanguard and vindicate the specific strategy of the revolutionary struggle with their active participation.

This strategy is the conclusion of the assessment of the degree of revolutionary determination of every dominated class. It necessitates the organizational unity of the Marxist-Leninist elements in order to confirm the leadership of the proletariat, which undoubtedly is the most resistant and revolutionary class. The proletariat having joined the struggle and in order to make this struggle fruitful needs its own specific political organization. The proletarian vanguard is fed with the power of its class and the proletariat, in depending on its political organization, secures the necessary assurance for the fruitfulness of its power. Thus the Workers Party is born.

In constructing the party of the working class, the correctness of each policy is assessed according to the quality of the methods which it presents for the growing survival of Marxist-Leninist groups and organizations. The survival of these groups and organizations is important due to the fact that these are the actual components of a potential whole. Yet, if this "survival" lacks the character of growth, it fails to develop into a cohesive whole. Thus, every line that would aim at mere survival of the Marxist-Leninist groups and organizations and pays no revolutionary attention to their growth is an opportunist and defeatist line as well.



Furthermore, we must demonstrate that the theory of "let us not take the offensive in order to survive," is in fact nothing else but saying "we would allow the police to destroy us in embryo without meeting any hindrance."

If defeatism is liquidationism then there remains no room for asking "why should we survive?" All the same, posing this question helps us recognize the opportunistic nature of the above-mentioned theory. This theory of "refraining to take the offensive" means negating all kinds of constructive attempts to increase the possibilities of the revolutionary forces.

This theory wishes to keep the struggle within the limits of the extremely meager possibilities not controlled by the enemy such as simple gatherings of elements not remarkable in quantity, in fact hardly exceeding the number of one's fingers, and then occupying these elements with the study of Marxist and historical works along with the observance of secrecy. The sphere of activity of these elements to the furthestmost point is limited to totally passive and dispersed contacts with some people from each dominated class strata. Every element in these organizations continues his habitual life in this kind of activity and naturally no effort appears necessary to change it.

Notwithstanding, there is no doubt that this gathering has been formed on the basis of realizing the same goals of those of the active revolutionary group, paving the way for the formation of a communist party and mastering the revolutionary theory. Yet this organizational gathering which tries to secure its survival through taking a passive stand against the enemy necessarily has to have a mechanical conception of the process of formation of a party and the mastering of revolutionary theory. It predicts that the party of the working class will be formed at "an appropriate moment" from the union between the Marxist-Leninist groups which have been able to save themselves from the enemy's blows. The revolutionary theory, too, is the product of the studies which these groups have been able to conduct on Marxism-Leninism, on the revolutionary experiences of other people, on the history of their country and on the passive and dispersed contacts they may have had with the people as the complementary condition. According to this theory, through a series of factors that are unexplainable to us, the historical determinism is to realize the formation of a party. Again the proletarian vanguard, which by now is united, is supposed to draw the masses into struggle during "favorable conditions."

In this theory, "appropriate moment" and "favorable conditions" are metaphysical conceptions which, without explaining anything, are used to temporarily cover its obvious weaknesses. They are put to work in order to establish a link between the abstract interpretation and analysis of this theory and reality.

If this link is metaphysical, then undoubtedly this relationship will never be real and organic. It is also quite natural that a theory which is not derived from objective reality naturally cannot establish a proper link with the objective reality. The thesis, which to show its correctness and objectivity, absolutely avoids going beyond its meager possibilities for existing, will in practice fall into an obvious subjectivism. Thinking of the future but lacking any means to reach it, it resorts to the metaphysics of "appropriate moment" and uses it as a bridge that can only be built in a nondialectical mind. This theory, which by displacing itself in a formula desires to give itself an appearance of mathematical precision, will diverge, more than ever, from reality and from the dialectics of the revolution. It claims: study, plus a minimum of organization, without any revolutionary striving for its growth, plus the "appropriate moment," equals the working class party. And the party of the working class, plus "favorable conditions," equals the revolution.

Undoubtedly, this formula cannot be correct as a solution for removing the present difficulties facing the revolutionary forces in the course of organizing the proletariat and the revolutionary masses. The "appropriate moment" and the "favorable conditions" will not materialize unless the revolutionary elements in every moment of their struggle meet the historical necessities properly. Then, what does this formula serve? It serves the opportunism which justifies its paralyzing fear of the enemy by presuming that its disintegration is impossible and its domination indestructable. It limits its revolutionary tasks to a point which avoids any engagement with the police. It devolves the development of the struggle to a metaphysical, and consequently, imaginary, determinism. Thus, we see that the grouping which originally had the aim of striving to construct the party of the working class, by taking an opportunist line, gets each moment closer to burying its goal, sacrifices these goals in practice in order to save itself. "Let us not take the offensive in order to survive," reveals itself in practice as "let us dismiss all revolutionary endeavors to construct the communist party in order to survive."

Nevertheless, the dialectic of the revolutionary struggle which finds its first great manifestation in the process of the genesis of a proletarian party, not only will not furnish this enthusiasm to survive but will give it the saddest of answers by imposing upon it an untimely death. It is at this same point that we clearly find out what was defeatist is liquidationist as well. It is no longer a debate over the fact that the policy aimed at "survival" has, because of its opportunistic attachments to this aim, lost the ability to grow, rather, the discussion is about the fact that such a line, in practice, would negate what it had devotedly set its aim at.

This line, in the practice of struggle, will run into a dead-end and will have no way out except by choosing one of two exits: either to adopt an active and revolutionary stand against the enemy and thus save itself; or to turn renegade and look for affection from the police to secure its survival.

The enemy has specific criteria for its behavior. It says, "come to terms with me in order to survive, accept my rule in order to save yourselves from my deadly blows." Any focus of activity which does not accept this call for unconditional surrender, whatever its field of activity, is considered a focal point of danger and, if it could not impose its survival on the enemy, it has nothing to do other than await the devastating attack by the enemy. There is nothing more rejoicing to the enemy than to have us as harmless victims. It shoots anyone remaining at the barricades. One either has to answer each blow with a blow in return, or has to come out of the barricades holding a white flag. There is no death more precocious than dying at the barricades without shooting.

But it appears that not all of the pillars of the theory of "survival" are yet demolished because this theory assumes, as the condition for its soundness, the addition of the principle of secrecy to the principle of "refraining from the offensive." It argues that not only must we refrain from taking the offensive but we must conceal each of our moves from the enemy's eyes and, naturally, the enemy, not knowing us, thus cannot strike us.

If we asked what can guarantee the success of secrecy, perhaps we will hear the answer that happens to be the most correct one - fully knowing the elements called into cooperation and continually striving to give them organizational training. The acceptance of this answer as a necessary condition for the preservation of an underground network is irrefutable. What can be refuted is the sufficiency of this condition. There is no need to refer to any historical experience to prove that this condition is insufficient. It is only necessary to take a look at our own present conditions. Our own short-term experiences demonstrate that any kind of over-dependency upon the organizational efficiency of any one comrade is a mistake. In fact, none of us, no matter how careful and sincere, can go on without making mistakes in this area. What can guarantee one hundred percent flawlessness is absolute inactivity. When we take action, study Marxism, try to promulgate it, and enjoy some sort of contact (no matter how limited) with others, it is possible to make mistakes. Not only our own mistakes endanger us, but also the mistakes of others open us to a perpetual front of vulnerability.

In the course of action we inevitably come into contact with elements and circles who are practically careless in guarding themselves and others. At the beginning it is neither possible to recognize them nor is it possible to educate them. I find it unnecessary to back up this reasoning with some tested examples, because I am sure that each militant comrade can enumerate many examples concerning this issue. In general it should be said that danger can always come from any one individual and that putting trust in individuals and their training, no matter how successful, cannot eliminate the dangers completely. However, the problem is that the danger does not end at the level of the individual. It begins with the individual and threatens the entire organization. We should think of how to free the organization from this danger.

Thought should be given as to what can open a defense umbrella over the entire organization, so that mistakes by the individual (what one should always expect) would not destroy the organization. One should find out what must be combined with the principles of secrecy (that necessary but insufficient condition) so that together they can provide the conditions for our growing survival. Secrecy is a method of defense but, by itself, it is a passive method and remains that way as long as it is not supplemented with firepower.

Thus, it is natural to emphasize that secrecy, without being accompanied by revolutionary firepower, is a non-active and insecure defense. If secrecy and revolutionary firepower together must be the condition for our survival, it is unavoidable to refute the fundamental principle of the theory of "survival," i.e., the principle of "refraining to take the offensive." Hence, the thesis of "let us not take the offensive in order to survive" will necessarily be replaced with the policy of "we must take the offensive in order to survive."

Excerpt From:

***Armed Struggle: The Road To The Mobilization Of The Masses***

by Bizhan Jazani - OIPFG

The Characteristics of the Present Revolutionary Movement

In a condition of extensive and systematic oppression, in the absence of spontaneous general struggle, and at a time when armed struggle is the mainspring of liberation movements around the world and through which other forms of struggle may crystallize, groups of revolutionary vanguards in our country adopted armed struggle as their central tactic in order to break the absolute oppression imposed by the regime; to break the deadlock facing the liberation movement; and to pave the way for a general mass movement. Armed struggle gave the vanguard the chance to withstand the most bestial treatment meted out by the "monarcho-fascist" regime of the Shah and stand up and fight against it.

Here we deal with those features of armed struggle that have been overlooked by individuals and organizations outside the armed movement and to which not enough attention has been paid by elements inside it. These features are:

1) The form of armed struggle employed by the vanguard makes it possible to fight a bigger enemy force with a much smaller and compact force.

2) In the absence of a general mass movement, the main tasks of these revolutionary forces are: (a) to inform and to rouse the masses; and (b) to mobilize and to organize them. In such a struggle every military blow is designed, not to annihilate a part of the enemy's forces, but to show the enemy that he is vulnerable and thereby to dispel the sense of helplessness and despair which have been the lot of our people for so long.

3) Armed struggle is a long and continuous process which aims to mobilize the masses. It is not designed to strike occasional disconnected blows against the regime (and especially its head and its leading personalities.) The armed movement does not intend to transfer power to the people by annihilating members of the regime individually. It is not an individual struggle in which a "hero" is able to change the course of history and free the people. The armed struggle is merely the start of a general mass movement. The revolutionary armed movement has unconditionally accepted the Leninist principle that "without the workers, all the explosives in the world are manifestly powerless." For this reason the armed movement has no other aim from its military actions than to mobilize the masses. The ultimate value of the armed struggle lies in its ability to support the masses in their fight against the ruling class.

There is a definite and well-defined demarcation line between terrorism and armed struggle. Armed struggle is a tactic employed by vanguard revolutionary organizations against ruling classes and their foreign allies. Military tactics are aimed at various targets and the selection of targets is based on scientific knowledge of the enemy. These blows constitute a special channel through which the movement informs the people, but it is not the only channel and the movement does not confine itself to it.

If, in the process, some of the regime's hated personalities are killed, this is not meant to destroy part of the regime's power. A total war waged by the masses will nibble away at the power of the regime and will ultimately destroy it in a final confrontation. And the power that replaces it will take shape through a lengthy process. It is thus that armed struggle is able to transfer the power to the masses. Otherwise it is obvious that the position of one hated person in the regime will be filled by more elements; or, taking it a step further, a ruthless gang will be replaced by a more ruthless lot. This is precisely the reason why people will never be able to achieve power through terrorism.

Those elements in the regime who are directly involved in oppressing the people are suitable targets, whose liquidation proves the regime's vulnerability. If the regime displays anger at such times, it is not because a pawn has been lost. In present conditions the regime enjoys relatively limitless possibilities and can easily replace a pawn or a number of pawns. Rather, its anger stems from the fact that the blows against it by the movement - be they against a pawn, a military base or any other target guarded by the regime - will reveal its (the regime's) weakness before a fighting force whose revolutionary nature is there for everyone to see, and who is engaged in disclosing the true nature of the regime and inciting the people to rise against it. The regime is also angry because the continuation of guerrilla activities will have an informative effect on the masses and draw them into the struggle.

Here lies the strategic importance of a continuing armed struggle for the growth of the movement and for achieving the aim of the first stage, i.e., the mobilization of the masses. The continuing existence of a

guerrilla struggle is the necessary condition for the development of the movement and for winning the confidence of the people in a struggle whose standard bearer the guerrillas are. Hence the regime's eagerness to announce the decisive annihilation of the guerrillas.

4) Armed struggle cannot turn into a mass movement in the first strategic stage. The workers and other urban proletarians are unable to join armed struggle during this stage. The fact that the more progressive elements of this class take part in armed struggle is no indication that the struggle has become a mass movement.

Armed struggle in rural areas is initially dependent on urban forces. The composition of a rural guerrilla unit has the same features as those of an urban unit. The aims of a rural unit are also the same as urban ones: winning the confidence of rural people and mobilizing them. Hence the continuing existence of the guerrillas, as well as their durability in the face of the regime's military force, are the necessary conditions for winning the confidence of the rural masses.

Even during the second stage when urban and rural guerrilla forces are on the increase, armed struggle may not be considered to have become a mass movement. The increase is merely an indication of a fully developed vanguard and its success in assuming the leadership of the masses. In this stage, urban populations engage in anti-regime protest movement; political and economic struggles begin to appear; but armed struggle is still employed exclusively by the vanguard. It is also during this stage that a political atmosphere pervades all urban areas; waves of guerrilla operations in the countryside as well as in towns begin to rock the rural areas. Yet the masses still do not take up arms to destroy their enemy. That is why the armed movement attaches so much importance to those tactics that will have a direct bearing on the mass movement.

Therefore, the armed movement, while believing in armed struggle as an important means of guaranteeing the continued existence of the vanguard, and through which it confronts the enemy, also paves the way for a mass movement during the two preliminary stages, with special reference to military tactics. The mass movement will be channelled through economic and political struggles, and the armed movement will try to assume leadership of these struggles with a view to their development.

To remain content with military tactics, especially through the first two stages, without considering the ever-extending channels that could contain the increased force of the masses is tantamount to creating an unbridgeable gap between the vanguard and the people. If we just accept that the bulk of the workers and other urban masses are unable to partake in guerrilla struggle, as is done by progressive elements, and that their role is limited to expressions of sympathy and admiration for the guerrillas, or help that will not have a decisive effect on the mass expansion of armed struggle, this in effect means that armed actions managed to create sentiments and emotions that were not taken advantage of in the fight against the enemy. In this case, public emotion is condemned to a perpetual embryonic existence and the movement will lose its revolutionary characteristics. The necessity to adopt tactics that are capable of absorbing the mobilized support of the masses - tactics that can achieve material popular support - follows from this.

5) The armed movement introduced itself to the people through a process of struggle, and the correctness of armed strategy was propagated in the whole of the liberation movement through practice. However, inside and in the environs of groups preparing for armed strategy, revolutionary theory played an important role in paving the way for the struggle. In the preparatory stage, politico-military groups discussed their strategy within the groups and immediately outside them. In the present changed situation, however, it is the duty of these groups to use every opportunity to talk with the people. Not only should the people understand the armed movement and the nature of the guerrilla struggle, they should also learn to know their own tasks in the struggle.

The movement must avoid giving exaggerated and distorted account of itself to the people, since this creates unjustified expectations. The people must be made to realize that the movement is merely a standard bearer that can overcome the enemy only with the active support and help of the masses. They should know that the guerrilla is not a "champion of liberation" who will achieve victory over the "ogre" in the forefront of the people. They must know that should they remain a mere witness during the process of struggle, the "champion" will be put to rout.

If the movement fails to employ means through which the people's passive sympathy can be transformed into active co-operation, if it fails to assume the leadership of the masses in a revolutionary struggle, then it will also fulfill its revolutionary tasks.

If the guerrillas promise victory over the regime without active participation on the part of the people, if not in theory, then at least in practice, they fail to grasp the historical role of the masses and fail to guide them in an extensive struggle against the regime; then not only will the movement fail to enlist their active support, but the masses will lose faith in methods of struggle that are feasible and will not turn to armed struggle. This in effect ensures their exclusion from struggle and their relegation to the status of spectators.

If the movement is unable to follow a line that will lead to the eventual mobilization of the masses, then despite an increase in mass sentiments and despite the guerrillas' spectacular sacrifices, it will fail.

6) The armed movement has undoubtedly put forward various new forms of struggle. These reflect the present conditions and the failure of past methods of struggle. There are, however, some organizations who reach conservatively to these new forms. In the working class movement there are some dogmatists who will only settle for methods established in the past, and are therefore condemned to a permanent nostalgic view of the present situation. They flip through the classical works of Marxism to discover anything that might be written against the new methods of struggle. These dogmatists somehow manage to transform a revolutionary theory into a counter-revolutionary one. On the other hand, these groups shut their eyes to the events of the past two decades and deny the achievements of armed struggle and the obvious transformations that have taken place. They wish to achieve overnight what the liberation movement failed to achieve in successive periods. They are wondering why the masses have not already taken up arms and why the regime is still powerful and has stayed put. This kind of approach to the problem not only lacks fundamental rules, it is also blatantly spiteful.

Armed struggle does not possess the magic power to achieve overnight, against all social odds, what might rightly be expected to take a hundred years; neither can it rectify a negative equilibrium in favor of revolution with a few "clever" military moves. The new methods of struggle have got to be adapted to historical conditions and the position of the society in practice. The old methods of struggle, i.e., those which people, through experience, found to be effective against the regime, cannot be rejected en-masse and put aside. There has got to be a dialectical relationship between the new and old methods. Armed struggle should fall into its natural mold in our society and old methods of struggle should be used alongside it. If we decide to import tactics, whose effectiveness has been proved in other societies, with no regard to the conditions of struggle in our country and the special features of our society, then we must prepare ourselves for many defeats. The defeats will continue until we produce a creative method of struggle.

#### *Grounds for the Appearance of Adventurism in the Armed Revolutionary Movement*

The main threat from within the revolutionary armed movement is, at the present time, a tendency to adventurism. To ignore this phenomenon and to fail to attack it will make the movement vulnerable and lead it to defeat. Here we shall try to analyze, in brief, the different facets of this deviation.

##### A) The Origins of Adventurism in the Movement

1) The conservatism and collusion of some traditional movements - especially the Tudeh Party and the National Front - are liable to cause a violent and misguided counter-reaction within our movement. The absence of comprehensive knowledge together with a lack of deep understanding about past struggles produces a superficial evaluation of these two movements. Some groups, because of their persistent rightist policy, have been pushed into a position of blatant liberalism, theory-peddling and fabrication of political groups. Their incorrect stand and their sporadic outbursts against armed struggle are further causes for reaction. Both these sets of reactions provide fertile grounds for adventurism in our movement.

2) There is, at the present time, no experience revolutionary working class vanguard which undertake to spread the fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism, as well as propagate the revolutionary path among the working class. In this context, disjointed group activities help to create deviationary alternatives. Thus the absence of a unified and experienced working class vanguard on the one hand, and the prevalence of various disconnected forms of struggle on the other, is another ground for the growth of adventurism in our movement.

3) When there is an absence of the sort of movement that embraces the whole population and the total burden of fighting the enemy of the people falls upon groups of vanguards, there is a danger that these groups may fall prey to sectarianism and be deflected from the principles of the struggle. This will in turn create conditions in which people are apt to attach little importance to the masses and help create an atmosphere of avant-guardism. The present vacuum created by the absence of an extensive mass movement, therefore, provides suitable grounds for the growth of adventurism.

4) At the present time, groups of vanguards are mainly composed of intellectuals and relatively conscious petit-bourgeois individuals. The relative ignorance and historical backwardness of the working class in our exploited society has effectively reduced their numbers amongst the vanguards and in the revolutionary armed movement as a whole. This objective state of affairs can help the growth of adventurism, deviationary ideas and petit-bourgeois tendencies.

5) In the world as a whole, a number of petit-bourgeois ideologies have appeared during the past decade that believe Marxism to be outdated. Deviation from creative Marxism-Leninism, which at the present

time has developed as revisionism and dogmatism inside the world working class movement, has paved the way for the growth of petit-bourgeois tendencies. Thus, those forces who should logically be expected to enter revolutionary struggle under the banner of Marxism-Leninism are being pushed towards these petit-bourgeois ideologies....

B) The Main Forms of Adventurism in the Armed Movement

1) To ignore the objective conditions which are relevant to the growth of the revolutionary movement; to consider the role of the vanguard out of its context; and to peddle the notion that the sensational sacrifice of some elements of the vanguard will immediately (or in a short time) attract the support of the masses, or even encourage their active participation in the struggle, is adventurist. Such conceptions about armed struggle should be replaced by a Marxist understanding of the dynamics of society and of the revolutionary movement in general. Today, we live in conditions where all factors are combined against the revolution. To believe that all these factors are amenable to change by one single factor, namely, the role of the vanguard - a vanguard in its most elementary form, for that matter - is an unscientific approach to society and to the movement. To persist in such a theory is to deny the role of the masses in the movement. To deny the masses their role in the movement - although those guilty might vehemently deny this - is the main form of adventurism.

2) Paying scant attention to revolutionary theory, concentrating only on "practical" and delimited actions, and attention to tactical matters while ignoring strategic questions, are all forms of adventurism.

When we fail to recognize that a guerrilla is an informed individual who performs a military assignment armed primarily with revolutionary theory; when we pay little or no attention to political studies and hurriedly try to exploit the excitement caused by a revolutionary action and wish immediately to transform whosoever may join the movement into an exemplary practitioner; and when we imagine that revolutionary theory is merely about tactical questions and sensational literature, then we are only revealing our adventurist tendencies, and this can be reflected in the revolutionary movement as a whole.

3) An absolute insistence on armed tactics of a particular nature in urban guerrilla struggle; making dogmas out of these tactics and under-estimating the value of other tactics besides armed tactics, is only a form of adventurism. To put too much value on sensational tactics, and to pay no attention to tactics that can excite the physical support of the masses for the movement, can alienate the former from the latter and ultimately defeat the movement.

Too much emphasis on the role of the "Fedae"; resorting to constant invocations of "martyrdom" to offset the absence of a mass movement, and the belief that the sacrifice of blood is sufficient for the start of the revolution, are aspects of adventurism.

4) An incorrect knowledge of the potential forces; seeing the struggle merely within the limits of available forces, employing tactics that can only satisfy the latter; disregarding genuine revolutionary forces merely because these will turn to struggle at a later date, are deviationary phenomena. Marxist-Leninist organizations are liable to succumb to the temptation of putting aside the special features of their ideology in order to get hold of the available forces offered by certain sections of the petit-bourgeoisie. Such acts can effectively cut the organizations off from the proletariat. This, in effect, means that they will have to make do with a limited force and ignore the potential force in whose hands the revolution will triumph; this is another form of adventurism.

5) Expressions of weariness about the struggle, demonstrations of impatience when the struggle drags on, and complaints about the masses which can turn into pessimism about them, is an aspect of adventurism. To employ vengeful tactics in order to offset the absence of a mass movement and to make continuous demands on the members for more and more sacrifices to fill such a vacuum, is a natural consequence of the same thing. To merely examine small tactical matters in an attempt to find the causes of defeat; to explain away the fundamental shortcomings of the movement by looking only at one part of the whole picture; and to blame one-self for the movement's inadequacies, is also adventurism.

6) Under-estimating the enemy, indulging in self-satisfied expressions because of some victories, exaggerating one's power and ignoring the power of other forces who face the ruling cliques and imperialism, is a further form of adventurist tendency which will prevent us from making a continuous effort in looking for new tactics, correcting the old ones and recognizing our shortcomings.

7) Adventurist tendencies can also appear in various other aspects of our work, e.g., in understanding and evaluating the real potentials of different individuals and their political as well as ideological training; in our moral discipline, and in our personal and collective conduct.

The petit-bourgeois deviationary tendency, which manifests itself in the form of leftist and pseudo-revolutionary attitudes, is liable to keep us apart from those more straightforward individuals who come to the movement. It can also drive us towards hypocrisy and false humility and prevent us from carrying out fundamental ideological training.

These are the main forms of adventuristic tendencies in groups and organizations attached to the armed movement. The less experienced an organization, the more exposed it is to the dangers of these tendencies. Some forms of leftism have a great attraction for inexperienced Marxist individuals, and it is quite true that "leftism" is "an infantile disorder" within the revolutionary working class movement. Left to itself, the disease can spread throughout the whole movement. Those comrades who prescribe the fatal medicine of leftism in order to cure an allegedly "rightist attitude," those comrades who in any way "criticize" a "leftist stand," which in practice is nothing short of an encouragement of this disease, are in effect the most dangerous protagonists of adventurism.

A determined fight against adventurism, in whatever position, the recognition of what are deviationary tendencies and a timely war against them, and a sober defense of revolutionary policy and ideology constitute the central task facing all elements and groups who are attached to the working classes. Failure to do this is tantamount to leaving the fate of the movement to unforeseen future events.

#### The Revolutionary Armed Movement and the Mobilization of the Masses

A clear Marxist understanding of the relation between theory and practice compels us to avoid making dogmas out of forecasts. These forecasts must be corrected and developed in the course of practice bearing in mind that the more distant future actions they describe, the more general they will inevitably have to be, thus becoming more subjective at the cost of objectivity. It is only by involvement in each stage of the struggle that our ideas will come face to face with the realities of a situation and thereby develop their objective and practical aspects.

Today, the armed movement ought to pave the way for the mobilization of the masses, and we are in possession of concrete data that can reveal the features of the next stage of the struggle. The better we are able to understand and analyze these facts, the more objective will be our forecasts.

In preceding chapters, sufficient emphasis has already been placed on the importance of a total mobilization of the masses in an armed struggle. Here, we merely touch upon a few important questions.

The tactics employed by the movement in the second strategic stage of the struggle are mainly of two kinds: military and political. Military tactics will continue to be the cornerstone of the struggle and will play the important part of expanding and developing the movement. Even if political tactics fail to achieve the desired expansion, military tactics and armed organizations will retain their pivotal importance and strategic role.

The pivotal role of the armed struggle is illustrated in the following ways:

a) Whereas political tactics can organize some forces in a struggle against the regime, the continuation of such a struggle and its employment for the final defeat of the ruling cliques will come about only through military tactics. The expansion and development of a mass struggle from the economic and political level to a military one, depends entirely on the continuing growth of armed struggle in Iran.

b) Armed struggle is the determining factor in rousing the masses against the regime. Although at any specific stage the people cannot be said to be able to take part in armed struggle, nevertheless, their pull towards a struggle against the ruling clique is directly influenced by armed struggle. Thus, the armed movement plays the main role in drawing the masses into the struggle.

c) The armed movement plays a fundamental role by standing up to the ruling groups, neutralizing their preventive tactics and ultimately suppressing them. If the struggle discontinues, the regime can easily suppress all economic and political movements. This is done firstly through counter-revolutionary brute force; and secondly, by employing suitable tactics, the regime will conceal its true nature from the despondent and defeated mass of the population. Thus, stagnation and oppression will rule over political and economic movements.

The armed struggle will, on the one hand, neutralize counter-revolutionary force with revolutionary force; and on the other hand, reveal, in the best possible manner, to the people and the world in general, the true color of the ruling groups. This will cause the masses to rise up after every blow, and at the same time stop the regime's oppressive rule over society. This is another aspect of the crucial role of armed struggle in the movement.

That is why political tactics are apt to develop and realize their true values in conjunction with military tactics. Hence a deep understanding of the revolutionary armed movement and its tactics is a must for all politico-economic groups.

*The Spread of Political and Economic Protests by the People and the Growth and Development of Armed Struggle*

Some individuals and groups attached to the armed movement are still under the impression that townspeople will join the urban guerrilla warfare in the near future, thus expanding the existing organizations and drawing the mass of the urban population into armed struggle. The consequences of such a belief are two-fold: firstly, it attaches no importance to armed struggle in the rural areas; and secondly, it is heedless of any form of mass political struggle in the urban areas.

If we assume that urban workers, artisans and intellectuals will directly join armed groups and take part in urban guerrilla struggle, then what need is there of guiding these forces into an economic struggle? Taken one step further, such a belief could mean that the organization and expansion of political and economic, or any other non-military, struggle, is inconsistent with the revolutionary armed movement.

We believe this to be a false assumption. We further believe that armed struggle will not become a mass movement in the urban areas. The tactics employed by armed struggle have some features which rule out the mass participation of urban population in it. This struggle will be limited to progressive and conscious elements, be they workers, intellectuals (i.e., professional classes), or others, in urban areas. The participation of workers and other non-intellectuals in the movement at the present time is a clear example of this basic trend. The composition of guerrilla organizations is liable, at some future date, to be changed through an increase in the numbers of progressive, working-class elements. However, the presence of these conscious elements in the armed movement must never be taken as proof of a mass participation in the struggle.

Armed struggle is bound to grow, despite the inevitable ups and downs which are natural in the development of any movement. Urban guerrilla organizations will expand and armed struggle will assume bigger dimensions and more effective forms. Nevertheless, the following impediments prevent this form of struggle from becoming a mass movement:

a) Urban guerrilla tactics are, from a technical point of view, extraordinarily complicated. In such a struggle every guerrilla will have to be a highly experienced commando. A complete command of the technicalities of struggle against the police - technicalities that continually become more and more complicated - and an extraordinary mobility are an absolute must for every guerrilla. The workers and urban proletariat who have not had sufficient training are unable to use these tactics. The use of these tactics will also be fraught with danger for an ordinary intellectual.

In an urban guerrilla war it is not possible to accept volunteers from amongst the workers and hope that a few experienced comrades will be able to command them. A commander in such a situation has limited possibilities to guide his men, who require leadership at all hours of the day in their various assignments. In such a struggle, every man plays a decisive role in protecting himself and his comrades-in-arms. The great mass of people turn to a struggle in large numbers and suddenly. Hence the above-mentioned features effectively rule out their participation in an urban guerrilla war.

b) Even the largest towns in our country have a limited capacity to accommodate guerrillas. A guerrilla force in Tehran, which is an exceptionally large town, cannot exceed an estimated number of a few hundred - between one and two thousand, if we include the auxiliary units. If we look at the way in which an urban guerrilla unit operates, we will realize that this figure represents an extraordinary force, and is the optimum capacity for military assignments in a town. If the capacity of a town for military actions and concealment is such that the actions of two or more groups overlap each other or cause problems for other groups, thus depriving them of important room for maneuver in the face of possible enemy search and destroy operations, then the continuation of a guerrilla force is a detrimental factor for us. Those who believe that townspeople will eventually join urban guerrilla organizations in the thousands, or tens of thousands, have, unfortunately no clear picture of the masses; nor do they have a clear understanding of the characteristics of our struggles. These are the people who occasionally start to murmur about a liberated zone in urban areas.

Urban guerrilla groups and their reserve units (i.e., sympathizers) are formed from conscious and progressive elements. The masses, despite their tremendous size and quality, are unable to partake in urban armed struggle.

c) The intellectuals are better prepared than workers and other proletarians to take part in this struggle. That is why the main force of the guerrilla struggle is composed of revolutionary intellectuals. This composition, with some increase in favor of the workers, will on the whole be maintained through the next stage of the struggle.

In contrast to these limitations and shortcomings, the armed struggle has the following possibilities in the mountains and rural areas.

In the countryside, ordinary rural elements can turn to struggle and, after an initial training by experienced cadres, take part in direct actions. There is no impediment to accepting the rural masses into armed combat units, and the reason for dispatching urban guerrilla units to the rural areas is because of the



military unpreparedness of the rural population. Not only farmers, but also workers and other urban elements, can engage in rural armed struggle and develop their potentialities in such a struggle.

The limitations of armed struggle in the towns and its expansion outside do not contradict the primary role of the urban areas in the first stage. In this stage, towns have various advantages over rural areas. These advantages were noted and emphasized by the movement with considerable results. These limitations of urban guerrilla struggle and the possibility of better opportunities in the rural areas, are being analyzed in relation to the armed struggle becoming a mass movement. (Since armed struggle outside the towns is vital to the future of the movement and also because it is very important in the total mobilization of the masses in an armed movement, we have devoted the last chapter of this book to the analysis of this problem.)

Thus, the present realities of the situation manifest themselves in two essential ways.

The first is that, parallel to the growth of armed struggle, the urban masses will become active through participation in economic and political movements, the continuation of which will depend on the growth of armed struggle. The second one is that armed struggle will become a mass movement in the rural areas. With the expansion and development of armed struggle in the rural areas, the urban and rural masses will join the struggle. Therefore, we shall in the future - i.e., at the end of the first and throughout the second stages - witness the increase of political and economic protests by the urban population. The expansion of these protests is a result of the growth in social contradictions, and the effect that armed struggle will have on these contradictions in order to reactivate them.

The revolutionary movements should not leave these waves of protest to look after themselves. The movement must actively organize these waves towards the realization of a general strategy.

At the same time, armed struggle in the urban areas will in the future enjoy a quantitative as well as a qualitative growth, and armed struggle in the rural areas will begin to expand. This will enable the urban masses to resort to political and economic struggle under the guidance of progressive elements from the revolutionary armed movement, while armed struggle in the countryside continues its growth with the participation of the bulk of the progressive forces.

This is the main feature of the movement's second strategic stage, that of mass mobilization. It is essential to complete this stage before the subsequent one, which will see the beginning of total military engagements with the mass participation of all peoples in Iran.

#### *The Formation of a Political Front Within the Revolutionary Armed Movement*

If we accept that the urban masses will turn to political and economic struggle as a result of armed struggle; if we further accept that the revolutionary armed movement should, with an emphasis on armed struggle, also exploit other forms of struggle for mass mobilization and for a total war in the future, then it follows that the seeds of political organizations attached to the revolutionary movement should be sown here and now. The organization of these forms of civilian entities is neither simple nor secondary. The task of these organizations will be mass protests in towns and the creation of a political front against the regime.

Even now some moves are taking shape in this direction. Those groups who have undertaken the organization of such are set on creating a political front which will support the armed movement. Should these groups and organizations clearly understand the pivotal role of the armed movement and set up a fundamental relationship with it, and at the same time adapt their policies to the definitive strategy of the revolutionary armed movement, then they will be regarded as the political wing of the movement.

We have already talked about politico-economic groups; publishing and propaganda units; and organizations abroad and their special features. This type of organizing is the main kind of formation, on the political front, which is taking shape in the present conditions. The most important tasks facing this front are:

- a) the organization of people's protest movements, which have economic connotations;
- b) the channeling of these movements along political lines;
- c) to introduce the revolutionary armed movement to the people;
- d) to reveal the nature of the regime and to inform people;
- e) international propaganda, in the interest of the revolutionary movement against the regime.

To accomplish these tasks we have need of conscious and progressive elements and various forms of organizations. The main type of formation would be politico-economic groupings. We have already mentioned the features of these groups and therefore here we merely deal with the kinds of tactics that must be employed by them.

These groups are so named because their members are conscious, politically minded and belong to a particular profession or branch of employment. And since all their activities are aimed at achieving political goals, the groups are as such regarded as political entities. Such a groups may comprise up to thirty to forty members, depending on the size and extent of its area of operation. The most important factor in the

formation of these groups is the clear understanding by their membership of the tasks undertaken by the groups. These tasks are specifically determined in relation to the revolutionary armed movement. These groups are exposed to the danger of being transformed into intellectual, theoretical groupings or "political" associations which might regard themselves, in the present conditions, as a replacement for, and the forerunners of, a party.

Although one cannot be dogmatic about the nature of membership, it is important to note that belonging to the same branch of employment will have a decisive effect on the way a group expands and fulfills its tasks.

These groups may be formed in any area where there is a minimum of economic activities and consequent demands. Nevertheless, it is obvious right now that professional and intellectual circles and manual trades provide the best contexts for the groups' activities.

Such activities will begin with the most elementary aspects of the struggle and spread to include a general strike within a particular trade, comprising as such a deliberate political protest against the regime. It is essential to organize small actions in a trade in order to pave the way for more important actions and the subsequent assumption of leadership in that trade. Only when society is completely governed by a political consciousness, especially in the student sections, will political matters act as an impetus for spontaneous collective actions.

A politico-economic group may be formed amongst the workers of a particular factory. Workers in various urban trades (such as shoemaking, tailoring, printing, etc.) can form their own respective politico-economic groups. These cells and groups may use all available legal channels, such as the phony trade unions that have been set up by the regime, as well as available negotiating machineries, in order to give shape to the demands of their respective trades and also to prepare their members for collective actions - providing no step is taken which might be construed as an approval of the regime and would thereby create a favorable impression amongst the members of the trade, towards the administrative set-up and specifically towards the regime as a whole.

Amongst the professions (teachers, writers, artists, students, and so on), the groups have various grounds for activity. Here, too, legal and semi-legal pretexts should be exploited to create a movement. Any problem concerning the trade, any small demand for extracurricular and administrative topic should be exploited for trade solidarity to provide grounds for trade activities. If these matters and other seemingly small topics are used in line with revolutionary tactics, they will realize their true values and cease to be underestimated.

Student activities at the present time are susceptible to assuming political overtones and of being transformed into political protests. The fact that political and economic movements of one sort or another have not yet fully expanded and stabilized, should not be used as a pretext for abandoning trade activities inside the universities. Insofar as a particular group of students does not have real economic demands, their sectional interests about cultural matters can easily assume political overtones.

Writers, poets and other responsible and well-informed artists can fulfill their roles in the liberation movement by openly protesting the regime.

Having reached the stage of development that enables politico-economic groups to establish workable relationships with one another, they can organize the total membership of a trade (for example, all teachers in Tehran or throughout the country; university students and students in higher education generally) in a concerted action. Even in such a case the groups must avoid undertaking tasks which go beyond their well-defined political and organizational responsibilities. To overlook this principle will act against the interests of a mass movement and therefore against the revolutionary movement. In organizing trade activities, an ideological monopoly is harmful. Any one group or person will play its part in these activities and co-operate with others. The important thing here is to have a uniform and harmonious understanding about these activities and their ability to adapt in order to meet the requirements of the revolutionary movement. Ideological opposition is essential against all persons who, knowingly or out of ignorance, wish to divert political and economic activities from their main course, and push those informed elements, responsible for the organization of these activities, into a struggle the futility of which has been abundantly proved by experience. The groups who lack a revolutionary strategy are allowed to partake in the general decision-making process commensurate with the amount of work they put into collective trade activities.

Another form of activity undertaken by the political wing of the movement is the setting up of propaganda and publishing cells in towns, which have the task of duplicating revolutionary handouts and pamphlets published by the armed movement (i.e., by the guerrilla organizations). These should then be circulated within the movement, including within the politico-economic organizations, or distributed directly and at night to the public in general. This is the least costly way in which publishing can be undertaken in towns and on the level of the movement.

The members of these cells will be prepared to withstand any punishments meted out by the regime. The enthusiasm and sacrifice with which the guerrillas prepared elements of the political wing, including the members of these cells, to make sacrifices and accept punishment has had undeniable results. The punishment meted out to the members of these cells will be far more severe than that suffered by politico-economic activists.

Publishing cells will undertake to get hold of facilities themselves, so that in case of betrayal, nobody else will be involved. These cells can have a one-way contact with the guerrillas and politico-economic groups.

Propaganda cells are somewhat similar to publishing cells. They are very small and compact and, in exceptional circumstances, even one individual can engage in activities which can bring about effective results. Slogan writing and the distribution of tracts also form part of their activities.

Outside the country those political groups who believe in armed strategy will have to assume a more definite formation. These groups must set up tribunes and publishing facilities independent of the old organizations, bearing in mind that if and when these organizations are prepared to put their propaganda facilities at the disposal of the movement, such offers should be accepted.

The most important thing for political groups outside the country is to have solidarity with forces inside and to maintain direct contact with the revolutionary movement. They should assess their duties vis-a-vis the movement and accept the principle that it is the inalienable right of the organizations and groups who are engaged in struggle inside the country to determine the politics of the movement. Departure from this principle will lead to a subjective assessment of society and even more subjective solutions for the movement. Harm suffered by the movement through the propagation of such deviationary solutions can only be neutralized by expending a great deal of energy. But the action of persons and groups who cause this harm is hardly forgivable.

If and when the political groups abroad set up official centers, guerrilla organizations will get in touch with them outside the country and harmonize their activities with the groups' programs of action.

The most important tasks of these groups at the present time are:

a) to introduce the revolutionary movement and its strategy to Iranians and progressive circles abroad. This task can be achieved with an emphasis on internal interests and the activities and publications of the revolutionary armed movement;

b) the creation of a unified and strong propaganda front against the regime and in support of the internal struggle;

c) to reproduce internal communiques, publications and revolutionary texts that reach them, and transfer them back to Iran on a large scale.

Political organizations within the revolutionary movement are bound to influence each other. Intellectual (professional) groups and organizations can help other sections of the movement in the population, including workers. Such help cannot be extended merely by putting on a pair of working-class overalls. An attempt to draw sympathizers from amongst workers and hope to make "trained cadres" out of them is no help to the liberation movement or the working class. To form politico-economic groups amongst the workers is the job of conscious elements of the working class. Intellectual groups can go to the help of the workers through concerted actions, general protest movements and expressions of sympathy and solidarity. Politico-military groups must guide the workers' economic movement along the general policy of the revolutionary movement.

In the event of a workers' strike, students can express their support and, if at all possible, engage in street demonstrations and head towards factory areas or working class localities. This might involve a running battle with the police.

Propaganda and publishing cells can easily publicize the workers' struggle; so can political groups abroad, thereby putting the regime under propaganda pressure and helping economic and political movements.

However, one thing is still unclear, and that is the role of politico-military organizations in such events. It is their duty to take the following steps:

a) they should determine the role of political groups and the forms of struggle that may be adopted, and actively propagate them in the movement;

b) they should gather, not general and brief, but definite and exact information about the economic demands and sectional requirements of the masses. They should also watch all non-military activities in society, analyze them and take clear actions in approving, strengthening and developing such activities;

c) they should allocate some of their experienced cadres, who have the necessary requirements and positions, to organize the political wing of the movement, to speed up the formation of political groups and to lead them;

d) they should employ the multifarious facets of general struggle for the expansion and development of the movement. The radical leadership, and methodical use of this general struggle and the forces behind it, is also the urgent task of politico-military organizations.

It is thus that the seeds of a political front in the revolutionary armed movement will take root. The growth and development of this front, the creation of uniformity between various dispersed elements and groups in it, and the establishment of a full relationship between the front and armed organizations in the future, will be achieved inside the liberation movement of Iran.

At the present time, the first steps have been taken for the formation of a political front. But the achievement of full unity amongst all revolutionary forces will depend on the growth and development of the revolutionary movement. It is only in the process of struggle that the true content of this front and the forces within it can be assessed and the nature of its leadership determined.

The people's liberation front of Iran, or any form of union that satisfies the same requirements, will put an end to the leadership vacuum in society. The struggles of the political and military wings of the revolutionary forces will be unified in this front and their combined energies and resources will be used to achieve the strategic goals of the movement.

To create such a front is one of the important aims of the revolutionary movement. The front will play a decisive role in organizing popular forces and employing any and all forms of effective struggle; it will be able to issue orders to all sections of the community. The front will give leadership to the most conservative actions of a civil servant as it does to the most revolutionary struggles waged by the army of liberation..

However, at the present time, guerrilla organizations must shoulder the duties of such a front according to their abilities.

So far, military activities have chiefly been used to achieve political aims; they have been tactics against the regime and against the imperialists. These tactics were designed to demonstrate the effectiveness of armed struggle and the necessity to carry it out; to disclose the dictatorial nature of the regime; to break the official silence and to smash the prevailing oppression; and to awaken the masses to the necessity of struggle. The tactics, which revealed the characteristics of the armed movement and have established armed struggle in society, will be unfailingly pursued in the future in a more developed form. In no time must the regime, imperialism and the comprador bourgeoisie (the last one being part of the ruling bloc, reflecting the exploitation of imperialistic monopolies) be ignored by the movement. Therefore, while armed struggle will pursue a general aim, it will, in its development process, engage in those activities which have a direct bearing on the people's day-to-day existence.

### *Guerrilla Support for the Urban Masses*

Now, we discuss the tactics employed by guerrilla organizations within the limits of an urban armed struggle in order to mobilize the masses.

A preliminary stage of development is essential before military tactics can be effective in people's political and economic movements, for two reasons:

- 1) The capacity of a guerrilla at the present time does not allow him to undertake a multitude of tasks;
- 2) Because of the people's unpreparedness and their conservatism at the start of a series of protest movements, military tactics may push them away from struggle. If, in present conditions, guerrillas resort to arms and bombs in a strike, the working masses who, after a long period of silence and inactivity, are only just beginning to take part in the struggle, will be overcome by fear of the regime and its vengeful tactics. This will, in effect, represent a retreat by the people and is thus against the interest of mass mobilization.

Therefore, the armed movement must, to begin with, engage in those activities which are designed to give moral support to the struggle waged by workers, intellectuals (professional classes) and other people. This support can assume the following forms:

a) Attempts must be made to introduce the armed movement to the people; to make known the prevailing political and economic conditions, and to reveal the dictatorial nature of the regime.

b) Established guerrilla organizations should take a direct part in the political life of society and publish their own thinking about various problems. The fact that during the preparatory phase, these organizations refrained, out of necessity, from using various forms of political propaganda, is no reason to remain silent today. It is by no means sufficient to be content with explanations given to the people in the form of communiques after military operations. While in some parts of our country such as Baluchestan, Sistan and Khuzestan, people, for any reason, come face to face with the regime; when people resort to the most elementary reactions to relieve the unbearable pressure of life they are under, when the regime throws in the most expensive phony celebrations and spends thousands of millions of dollars on arms and proudly boasts about its role as the gendarme of the region, and when the regime engages in adventurism in an

imperialistic front against the peoples of the region, then it is time for the guerrilla organizations to open a dialogue with the people - they must not remain silent.

No doubt it is also necessary for the guerrillas to explain their actions to the people and to familiarize them with their tactics. They must not, however, be content with the incorrect and simple analysis of the general public regarding their actions - as has been the case in some recent instances. Attempts must be made to inform people, to correct their previously held notions, and to lead the masses along a revolutionary path.

c) Attention to people's needs and their day-to-day problems: The general strategic aim of the armed movement is a people's democracy. This system will be able to provide adequate answers to people's social and economic problems. Nevertheless, it is incorrect to by-pass people's present-day needs merely because we hold such progressive ideas. In the interests of the people, the movement must provide suitable and practical slogans for current problems. We cannot defer people's present-day needs to the promised land. We must try to understand their problems and talk them over with every section, branch of employment and class in society - not merely in an outline and general sense, but in a detailed and exact manner. It is imperative that we propose feasible solutions for today's problems so that they provide people with the necessary impetus to move. For instance, when parents of children both in public and private schools are under severe financial pressure because of school fees, the guerrillas should start a campaign explaining the consequences of such an anti-popular system of education and the effects it will have on the future of their children; extend the campaign against turning state schools into private ones; demand the end of fees in state schools; and put forward a practical program to raise the standard of education in these schools. Such a campaign does not prove that we recognize the regime. On the contrary, it demonstrates the irresponsibility of the government and reveals its anti-popular characteristics. When the cost of living shoots up in a relatively short time, it presents an opportunity to a guerrilla to demonstrate to the people the working of a capitalist system in practice; he can isolate the real perpetrator of this system in our society and pinpoint its true beneficiaries and those sections who have suffered as a direct result of a rise in the cost of living.

d) An important task of guerrilla organizations is the expression of solidarity and sympathy with spontaneous popular actions when the workers of a trade or a factory, students or other sections of the community, come face to face with the ruling bloc in pursuance of their economic and political demands.

### *The Effectiveness of Military Tactics in People's Economic and Political Struggle*

Having prepared the people to accept military operations, the guerrillas will begin to gather the required force for effective military tactics, and thus armed, will enter the economic and political life of society:

a) Armed exchanges with the regime and the ruling class: When the regime employs its armed mercenaries against unarmed and defenseless people; when striking workers, protesting students, or any group or section of unarmed people receive bullets as an answer to their political and economic demands, then the guerrillas, whose position in the struggle has been clearly defined, will resort to retaliatory actions. These tactics will be aimed at those elements, organizations and cadres of the regime who either took part in the suppression or had a vested interest in it. The guerrillas' slogan will be: The killing of defenseless workers will be followed by the execution of greedy factory owners and the regime's murderers; the factory owners will have to pay the price for the regime's brutality and their own greed with their properties, their lives and those of their families. The guerrillas will force the factory owners to stop the regime's military intervention in the event of a strike by workers for economic demands. This in itself is a form of guarantee for the right to strike.

In cases where a hated element in the regime resorts to an act against the people - more especially against a particular trade or a certain section of people - the guerrilla will rise in defense of them or even in defense of a particular individual.

b) Fulfilling the economic needs of the people: The guerrillas are involved in the day-to-day life of the people, both through the political wing of the revolutionary movement and, directly, through their units of sympathizers. Wherever there is sufficient ground for such a spontaneous popular action or whenever such an action has already begun, the guerrillas will have the opportunity to employ effective military tactics to help fulfill the people's demands. Kidnapping home and foreign industrialists and big capitalists and consulting workers about their fate is a symbolic instance of a relationship between the guerrillas, workers and other proletariat. To bring pressure to bear on home and foreign factory owners in order to give in to the economic demands of the workers is an instance employed to test military effectiveness of a tactic.

In a strike the guerrillas can enter the scene to help the strikers. For instance, when the drivers of the Tehran Transport Company went on strike, the regime used army drivers to break the strike. In a case like this, the guerrillas will announce that any bus driven by army men will be attacked. Obviously, this

announcement will reverberate throughout the town in no time. To back the announcement the guerrillas will explode a bomb or two, which will put an end to the regime's anti-popular tactic.

The guerrillas need not always wait for the people to take actions before they employ tactics to back school and economic demands put forward by the proletariat. For example, the guerrillas can kidnap some or other reactionary individuals, who have invested money in the educational system and through which they pocket millions of tomans at the start of the school year. The acceptance of working class children in their schools or factories should be demanded as a condition for their release. This operation can be combined with extensive explanatory literature dealing with the anti-popular system of education.

There are tens of other alternatives for the effective use of military tactics. Progressive organizations can choose the most suitable alternatives in order to involve themselves in the lives of ordinary people.

The result of these series of operations is the creation of a kind of revolutionary rule under the domination and within the sphere of enemy rule. At this stage, the guerrillas have various fields to effect their rule. As is the case in rural areas where the guerrillas effect their rule even before liberation of a region, so also is it possible to foresee such a situation, with special features, in an urban area. Such a double rule will exist only in circumstances where urban guerrillas are approaching the height of their power and waves of protests have enveloped a town. This will be the beginning of a mass armed movement.

When the country is a conglomeration of guerrillas, ruling cliques, home and foreign capitalists, political and military representatives of imperialist powers and is being continuously attacked by all these forces; furthermore, when armed struggle plays an effective role in determining the people's day-to-day existence, the conditions under which movements by masses of people appear and develop for political and economic demands, then the second strategic stage of the revolutionary armed struggle is at an end, and the struggle that has already begun in the countryside will be reinforced by urban as well as rural people, thus leading to the start of a mass movement.

The extent of mass protest movements will vary with changes in the factors that determine the conditions of struggle. However, the policy of the regime and its foreign allies regarding the revolutionary movement and people's activities will be a vital factor.

The experience of most revolutionary movements shows that when a country is dominated by a military atmosphere, forces within it will engage in military combat. In these circumstances the great bulk of the forces will probably be directed towards mass military operations, and political and economic movements will have a secondary role.

What is absolutely clear is this: that mass protest movements have already begun to appear, and that armed struggle has proved its ability to rouse the masses against the regime. Therefore, the important thing for the armed revolutionary movement is to fully appreciate the necessity of organizing these protest movements and consider it as part of its preparation for the revolution.